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# Soil and Water Research Center - Sidney

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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SIDNEY

*Sidney June 1963*

SOIL AND WATER RESEARCH CENTER, SIDNEY

I had hoped that when I came out to Sidney this spring that I might be able to watch some dirt being moved on the Soil and Water Research Laboratory here at Sidney. Apparently, there has been some delay in getting the necessary architectural plans prepared and clearing of land titles. However, I do hope that the latest schedule announced by the Department of Agriculture, calling for the contract award in August of this year, will be strictly adhered to.

I have also discussed with the Subcommittee on Agriculture Appropriations in the Senate the possibility of getting an additional \$150,000 in fiscal year 1964 to speed up planning, operations and staffing during the construction period. I hope that the Subcommittee will give formal consideration to this request soon after I return to Washington.

As you know, Mr. F. H. Siddoway will be coming to Sidney in September to take over the direction of the Laboratory. From all information at my disposal, he appears to be a very fine, well trained, and experienced scientist.

The new Laboratory, when completed, should prove to be a substantial economic benefit to the Sidney community. The staff will not be large, but it will be permanent, and there is considerable traffic with an important facility of this kind. When the Laboratory is in full operation, there will be approximately 30 employees, 10 of which will be professional researchers. The



work being done by the Agriculture Research Service is an important cooperative effort. In this instance, they will be working closely with Montana State College and the farmers and ranchers of Richland County and the neighboring areas.

Research in new techniques of farming can be of great importance in combating one of our most unpredictable problems -- weather conditions and annual moisture. Mother nature has not always been good to the farmers and ranchers of eastern Montana. Through research we have been able to ease the burden of the dry years, the hot summers and the hard winters. More can be done, and that is what the Federal Government hopes to do here at Sidney in the development of new and different ways of treating the soils and conserving moisture.

I shall watch the progress of the Sidney Soil and Water Research Laboratory with keen interest, and it was a real pleasure to have had a small part in making this Laboratory a reality.

September, 1961 -- formal announcement that Soil and Water Research Laboratory would be constructed at Sidney

October, 1961 -- \$30,000 of Department of Agriculture 1962 funds were reprogrammed to permit the preparation of plans and specifications for the Sidney Laboratory

January, 1962 -- Administration's Budget requests \$395,000 for construction at Sidney in fiscal year 1963. The House deleted this item but it was restored in the Senate and accepted by the conference.

October, 1962 -- \$395,000 appropriated for construction at Sidney

Fiscal year 1964 - additional \$150,000 requested by Senators for expediting planning and early staffing at the Laboratory

#### SCHEDULE

Completion of final plans & specifications	- June 1963
Advertising for bids	- July 1963
Awarding of contract	- August 1963
Start of construction	- September 1963
Occupancy of facility	- August to October 1964